



VISITING ARLINGTON WITH CHILDREN

Arlington National Cemetery is a beautiful and memorable place for children to visit! But for many children, touring a cemetery is a new and unusual experience. Use this guide to plan ahead for a meaningful visit.



WALKING

You could be doing a lot of walking during your visit, so make sure to wear proper footwear. Most of the pathways are paved and perfect for pushing strollers. However, there are few places to sit within the cemetery.



RESTROOMS

There are limited restroom facilities inside the cemetery. Restrooms are located at the Welcome Center, Memorial Amphitheater and the Columbarium. There is a family restroom in the Welcome Center, and the women's and men's restrooms in the Welcome Center also have changing stations. Note that there are no changing stations in the Memorial Amphitheater or Columbarium restrooms. Arlington House and the Women in Military Service for America Memorial also offer restrooms.



WATER

ANC is large and the weather is often hot in the summer, so it is important to stay hydrated. We encourage bringing refillable water bottles on your visit. There are water fountains located at the Welcome Center, Memorial Amphitheater and other locations around the cemetery. A map of water found locations can be found [here](#). You can also use the ANC Explorer mobile app to locate the closest water fountain. For more information and to download the app, go to <https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Explore/Find-a-Grave>.



FOOD

Food is NOT allowed inside the cemetery. Make sure to eat a snack before you visit.



SUN EXPOSURE

There is limited shade, so we encourage bringing sunscreen and a hat.



For more visitor tips and information, please see <https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Visit>.



ANSWERS TO CHILDREN'S COMMON QUESTIONS

What is a cemetery?

A cemetery is a place to honor and remember people who have died. After people die, they are buried in a cemetery. A headstone is placed above their grave with information about the person, such as their name and their birth and death dates, to help us remember them.

Why is ANC important to Americans?

Arlington National Cemetery is one of the country's oldest national cemeteries. It was created during the Civil War – over 150 years ago. It is the final resting place for nearly 400,000 military service members and their family members. Even if you do not know someone buried at ANC, you can visit to remember and to show respect for those buried here.

How should I behave in a cemetery?

Funerals take place at ANC on Monday through Saturday, and people visit the graves of their loved ones every day. When you visit, you should show respect for the people mourning or visiting their loved ones. Some ways to show respect: use your inside voice; walk instead of run; do not climb on trees, headstones or monuments; and stay on the pathways unless you are visiting a specific grave. (Learn more about proper behavior at ANC at <https://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Visit/Visitor-Etiquette>)

What are the different ways people remember their loved ones?

There are many ways that people mourn, honor and remember their loved ones. Visiting a grave is the most common way people remember their loved ones. Sometimes they also leave things on or near a headstone, such as flowers to symbolize beauty and life, and American flags to honor their military service.

What is a columbarium?

Sometimes people and their families choose cremation instead of burial. Cremation is when a body is burned in a special facility and the ashes are saved in a container called an urn. The family can keep the urn, scatter the ashes somewhere meaningful to them or place the ashes in a cemetery. At ANC, the Columbarium is the place where a family may place their loved one's urn and visit it there just as other families visit a gravesite.

Why are many headstones identical and why are some different?

The white marble headstones scattered throughout the cemetery are provided by the federal government at no cost to the family or loved ones of the deceased. The larger and more opulent headstone markers are private markers that were purchased and are maintained by the person's family. As a result of limited space, ANC no longer allows families to purchase private headstones.

What is the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier?

In the past, sometimes soldiers were killed in battle and their bodies could not be identified. These soldiers were buried with headstones labeled "Unknown" or "American Soldier" instead of their names. To honor all these soldiers, the U.S. government built the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in 1921. There is one soldier from World War I, one soldier from World War II and one soldier from the Korean War buried at the Tomb. There is also an empty space to honor the people who fought in the Vietnam War and remain missing or unidentified. The Unknowns represent all unidentified service members who gave their lives for the United States.

What should I do if I see a funeral procession?

If you see a funeral procession, you can show respect by moving out of the way, standing still and staying quiet until it passes. If you see a funeral in progress, you should stay quiet until you are no longer nearby. Remaining quiet is an important way to show respect.